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A PRIMA DONNA

AND

SCENES
from
REAL LIFE

By
George Henry Curtis

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A * PRIMA * DONNA

AND

SCENES FROM REAL LIFE.

BY

GEORGE HENRY CURTIS.



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❧ PRELUDE ❧

If harmony to thought and utterance cling
In mildest measure through my simple lines ;
If out of life's drear discords some designs
Of heavenly concords may appear,—then sing,
Thou lover of thy race, while on the wing
Of faith thou soarest far away from earth,
Where sounds of welcome cheer thy newer birth
With strains of joy beyond thy high imagining!

Yet leave us not for aye! Still let us hear
New words of gladness with an ampler tone ;
Reveal again the passion all thine own!
That highest hope may banish all our fear,
A smile of ecstasy chase every tear,
While all dark birds of omen hence have flown.

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MARIE BRENNER.

MARIE BRENNER:

CHILD OF SONG.

“If music and sweet poetry agree,
As they must needs, the sister and the brother,
Then must the love be great ’twixt thee and me,
Because thou lovest the one, and I the other.
Downland to thee is dear, whose heavenly touch
Upon the lute doth ravish human sense :
Spenser to me, whose deep conceit is such
As passing all conceit, needs no defense.
Thou lovest to hear the sweet melodious sound,
That Phœbus’ lute, the queen of music, makes :
And I in deep delight am chiefly drown’d,
When as himself to singing he betakes.
One god is god of both, as poets feign :
One knight loves both, and both in thee remain.”
—*William Shakespeare.*

CANTO FIRST.

I.

WHERE mountains blue in the far distance lie,
And shining streamlets in their gladness run ;
Where quiet upland lakelets brightly vie
With the soft shimmering of the summer sun ;
Where, near the peaceful hamlets, one by one,
A long, smooth river in its beauty flows,
Stands Annville : there pause with me, nor shun
The modest flower that in yon garden grows,
Sweet plant that all do love, a pure and budding rose.

II.

She was the youngest of a flock of three,
 Charles, Margaret and Marie Brenner nam'd,
 Who from a pious father trustingly,
 Protection and a lov'd example claim'd.
 No name in Annville was less defam'd
 Than good Elias Brenner's, borne from youth ;
 Of no base circumvention e'er ashamed,
 He lov'd and fear'd his God, and spoke the truth :
 A just and honest man, too rarely seen, in sooth.

III.

The partner of his youth, lov'd evermore,
 And dearer as the mother of the three,
 Rebecca Brenner smiled, and softly o'er
 Each feature shone a sunny memory.
 Replete with health, from bitter envy free,
 She joy'd to make each passing day but yield
 Its own priz'd quota of life's goodly glee,
 That time's brief work be cheer'd, in future field,
 By peace, while shelter'd still by faith, the heav'nly shield.

IV.

The sun, the mount, the lakelet and the stream
 Make seemly setting for the fertile vale :
 And round the villa fairest flowers, I deem,
 Bend gracefully beneath each gentle gale.
 No rare exotic there can aught avail
 To shade the lily in her white repose ;
 Nor bid the lovely lilac in her purple pale,
 Nor hide the beauty of the queenly rose :
 And standing sentry over all, the tall elm grows.

V.

Like fairy bells the honeysuckles hung
 Around the pillars in a trellis'd woof;
 And with the small leav'd, red flower'd cypress flung
 Their fragrance from the broad piazza's roof.
 The sweet syringa stood not far aloof,
 Amid parterres of pinks and violets;
 The jessamine and heliotrope gave proof
 Of careful culture: so, the heart that sets
 Some store of love on flowers, life's loveliest lesson gets.

VI.

O barren else had been the portico,
 And sill and lintel too severely straight;
 The cornice and the lengthen'd line below
 To tasteful eye had shar'd no finer fate.
 But now, around, from door to garden gate,
 And o'er the double-storied villa there,
 The small tree, evergreen, and flower ornate
 Their varied, leafy line of beauty bear,
 And all are fair and fresh by daily toil and care.

VII.

Nor were choice fruit and esculent forgot,
 As stretching from the villa's rear were seen
 The apple, cherry, plum and apricot
 In dainty dalliance with the pear so green.
 And toward the barn, potato, beet and bean
 In wide rows grew beside the waving corn;
 Light lettuce and the pea had place between
 The parsley delicate, of wild weeds shorn,
 And rich, red currants which the encircling fence adorn.

VIII.

Beneath the elm that sentry stood o'er all,
 A living spring of water pure and cold
 There gleam'd to gladden, when midsummer's call
 Straight to its bubbling brink drew young and old.
 At eve his tender tale the robin told,
 Perch'd on a pendent branch, and fitly plum'd ;
 His black tiara and his breast of gold
 Convulsive shook,—his eyes shot fire,—consum'd
 With love's sweet agonies, he tirelessly resum'd.

IX.

Delighted audience had this evening song,
 As sang this robin with a lover's glee ;
 The heart and ear of one who listen'd long,
 And oft before had heard his minstrelsy.
 All pleasant sounds in nature soothingly
 Sent gladness glowing to her secret soul ;
 Wild waterfall, the plaintive pine, and bird and bee
 To Marie like enchanted voices stole :
 While air, apt angel harp, breath'd softly through the whole.

X.

A robust figure of a middling hight,
 With violet eyes and wavy dark brown hair ;
 A face that in repose, to human sight
 Gave little token of the spirit there ;
 But lit by love, was more than passing fair :
 A mind unconscious of its slumb'ring power ;
 A will that needed little to declare
 Its self-reliance in the darkest hour :
 Were Nature's gifts to Marie, rich in her rare dower.

XI.

One precious gift beside made glad her youth,
 A voice so purely ton'd, and high and clear,
 You would have deem'd that, strong in health and truth,
 Its owner lov'd its echo best to hear.
 O sweetest sound on earth and ever dear,
 The voice of mother or of maiden mild!
 In joy or sorrow let it still be near
 To cheer and comfort Nature's lonely child,
 Restoring sunny summer for each winter wild.

XII.

'Twas Saturday night,—the robin's tale of love
 Had ceased. The sun had set, and in the west
 His red and purple rays shot far above
 The horizon and the distant mount's bold crest.
 The church spire pointed to the home where blest
 And happy souls sing safely evermore;
 And all around prefigur'd the calm rest
 The Christian longs for when his days are o'er.
 And surely, this frail life needs all that faith can store.

XIII.

Now toward the church the youthful choir repair,
 And father Brenner, and his daughter too;
 The summer evening sounds and summer air
 Are winsome as a lover's words to woo.
 "O father, seem these sunsets not to you
 Like pictures, haply, of those realms on high,
 Where God will place in mansions ever new
 The cherish'd children of His charity,
 Redeem'd by Christ, made pure for heav'n's sanctity?"

XIV.

“ I think that tones and colors, daughter dear,
 May in themselves be beautiful. The test
 Of their true worth lies in the hope sincere
 Which they inspire in any human breast,
 Be what is seen, or heard, or felt, confess'd
 In Nature or in Art; and they are right
 Who view these scenes serene so mildly drest
 In hues of heaven, as preludes to the sight
 Of that abode of endless happiness and light.”

XV.

Ascending the plateau where stands the pile
 Devoted to the service of Heav'n's King;
 Pure, filial and paternal words beguile
 Their way while willing wisdom's ways to sing.
 It is a neat nor unsymmetric thing,
 This rural Gothic church with steeple high;
 Its founders look'd with fond imagining
 On altar, organ, and on sacristy,
 And thought them all too poor for God's pure sleepless eye.

XVI.

Reclining 'gainst a sturdy oak near by,
 Stood Adam Ericsson; broad shoulder'd he
 And tall, with smooth round face and mild brown eye,
 And brow of thought, and mien of modesty
 That well became his Northern ancestry.
 He taught in Annville Academy,
 And played the organ with a skill so free,
 That his loved chum, Charles Brenner, truthfully
 Said, “ Music was his mission, not Divinity.”

XVII.

“Good evening, Adam Ericsson,—the day
 Has left us with a beauty quite its own.”
 Upon the organist’s fair face alway
 A smile play’d when he heard the gentle tone
 Of Brenner’s voice, by gracious accents known.
 “Good evening, friends,” the Norseman quickly said,—
 “With scenes and souls like these who could be lone,
 Or mourn the loss of hours forever fled?”
 And as he frankly spoke, he gently bowed his head.

XVIII.

“O young professor,” Brenner said, “should not
 Your pliant pupils often thus be taught
 From heaven-lit views, that glimpses of their lot
 Are oft from Nature’s book the soonest caught?”
 “Indeed,” said Adam, “’tis my constant thought
 To seek like hours and hues, so seldom giv’n;
 Since books with axioms and strict science fraught,
 Although they free the mind by error driv’n,
 Charm not their hearts, nor yield, alas! one hope of heaven.”

XIX.

“And more,” responded Brenner: “in the young
 The love of beauty and of wonder pleads
 For frequent illustration. Eye and tongue
 With innocent delight proclaim their needs.
 Activity of mind and body feeds
 On well-set views of Nature’s varied forms;
 Her milder phases are of peace the seeds,
 While winds, and waves, and waterfalls and storms
 Arouse the soul whose faith in God’s great goodness warms.”

XX.

Engag'd in cordial converse thus, they join
 The choir assembled in the organ loft ;
 Soon sounds the instrument by touch divine,
 In heavenly harmonies that, changing oft,
 Reveal the sweet surprises, loud and soft,
 Which sweetly charm the ear and calm the heart.
 O listen, while the strain shall quickly waft
 Your soul to starry spheres, where sudden start
 In high accord, strange voices with angelic art.

XXI.

'Tis well that in the church the organ be,
 The noblest instrument that man has made
 Wherewith to praise his God befittingly,
 Supporting human voices with its aid.
 Perversion of right usage is the trade
 Of some who touch it with profanity ;
 Defiling Sacred Art which is afraid
 To desecrate God's holy church thereby :
 Not so did Adam Ericsson his gifts apply.

XXII.

His opening prelude gave delight to all,
 Because inspired by a motive true ;
 No soul was fuller at its final fall
 Than Marie Brenner's ; and the singers too
 Sat mute, with sweetest joy emotions new,
 Intent upon the player's skill and eye.
 But Marie's reverie was rare to view,
 In that her practis'd ear and brain would try
 To catch the spirit of her master's melody.

XXIII.

It was unconscious homage to his gift,
 And for his teaching in the school, at home,
 And ever where his mind might seek to lift
 Her thoughts from trifling things, and bid them roam
 In regions where, far from the dross and foam
 Of selfishness, a lovelier life appears!
 Faith on his castle was the golden dome
 That lit his inner life and banish'd fears.
 Therefore is Marie pleas'd at what she sees and hears.

XXIV.

There is no perfect picture without shade,
 And light and beauty stand confess'd thereby;
 The concords of sweet music without aid
 Of discords would be tame exceedingly.
 Close neighbors to our smiles fierce frowns do vie
 For mastery in the heated rounds of life;
 Along with gracious words and courtesy
 Come harsh and grating sounds of human strife
 To lover and to maiden—more to man and wife!

XXV.

Sole leader of the opposition, he,
 One black-eyed, curly-haired, audacious man,
 Is Nicholas Ritza, surely sworn to be
 Of general mischief alway in the van.
 Rich and rejective, cruel heart, his plan
 Is shrewdly bold, accompanied by smiles
 Of wicked condescension, deadlier than
 The more transparent rogue's innoxious wiles,
 Because his fulsome flattery wounds while it beguiles.

XXVI.

Whose eye but Ritza's keenest to detect
 The shyness of the youthful singer's breast?
 Whose honied words but Ritza's could reflect
 A heart not pleas'd but ever in unrest?
 "Divine performance!" quoth he, half in jest,
 To Marie, as the organist then ceas'd,—
 "But grandest instrument of man ne'er blest
 The human soul like woman's voice, increas'd
 To sweet perfection—therefore sing!—give us a feast!"

XXVII.

"Petition more sincere I might have heard,
 O Nicholas Ritza! But I will obey,
 If Ericsson accede." The touching word
 Had scarce escaped her lips, when, like a ray
 Of sudden joy through isolated way
 Shone forth the light from Ericsson's brown eye.
 He had not in his heart to say her nay,
 And chose some music of his own to try:
 A psalm of David fill'd with sweet serenity.

XXVIII.

"The Lord is merciful and gracious," sung
 In keeping with the psalmist's penitence;
 The cultur'd voice was heard; the facile tongue
 Made ev'ry word distinct with confidence;—
 A canon musical, instinct with sense.
 Parental teaching and preceptor's drill,
 The psalmist's words, her own intelligence,
 All, all combined to give the artistic thrill,
 And shape the perfect rendering to her own will.

XXIX.

O how and where shall woman fitly praise
 Her Maker for His priceless gifts to her?
 Shall not her higher, purer powers raise
 In church new joy for each true worshiper?
 Then let the bigot in his rage prefer
 The rude inflections of the untutor'd voice;
 He will not cause one humble soul to stir
 In cordial feeling with his meaner choice,
 Nor bid the cultur'd mind in happier thoughts rejoice.

XXX.

So Brenner thought, rapt, list'ning, while he drew
 True comfort from each word of David's song;
 So thought the organist with pride as new
 As when, at first, his pupil could prolong
 A phrase of music on her thrilling tongue;
 So thought the ruthless Ritza, watching near,
 The look of fix'd repose that lasted long
 Upon the faces of the choir, whose clear
 Appreciation of her song gave Marie cheer.

XXXI.

"Bravo! bravissimo! my Ericsson:
 Take the sincere salute which now I fling
 With a new joy to you; for surely none
 But Marie Brenner could your music sing
 With a more soulful voice of truest ring.
 You are the new Bellini born to be,
 And Marie is the Garcia who could bring
 New shading to that master's melody."
 'Twas thus the facile Ritza spoke complacently.

XXXII.

“It was not my design to imitate
 The style of that true son of Art Divine ;
 My taste and study rather more relate
 To older and severer schools ; in fine,
 To Harmony’s strict treatment I incline.
 ’Twas Marie’s skill,” said Adam, “which restor’d
 The charm’d and emphasiz’d result, not mine.

So, Ritza, sing with David’s sacred word :
 ‘My song shall alway of Thy kindness be, O Lord.’”

XXXIII.

Now Ritza lik’d not Mendelssohn. His tone,
 A tenor true, but little train’d by art,
 By sweetness less than power it was known,
 And gain’d small triumph e’en with Marie’s part.
 O slightly touch’d he the capricious heart
 Of man or maiden, though he sang with zeal ;
 The one pronounced him bold, the other smart ;
 No self-abandonment in his appeal,
 While both confess’d his confidence, they fail’d to feel !

XXXIV.

Was Ritza then discomfited ? O no !
 Although small sympathy was given him ;
 He charg’d the faultless composition so
 With bitter words, and tried to trim
 His ruff’d ringlets with an air so prim,
 You would have thought him Disraeli at ease,
 Although as lyric artist he was slim !
 What loss to him if but his person pleas’d ?
 He could not be rebuk’d by taunts, nor yet be teas’d !

XXXV.

At length in choral by Sebastian Bach
 The singers join in firm full harmony ;
 To serious souls this is no time to mock
 Their Maker with a dull monotony.
 What ease in all the parts, and yet how free
 From trite progressions flows each melody ;
 A blesséd foretaste of the joy to be,—
 Young men and maidens thus becomingly
 Strive fully now to praise their Maker cheerfully.

XXXVI.

The youthful choir retired. The lights put out,
 Its members homeward trod their nightly way ;
 To some the exercise brought thoughts devout,
 To other some the occasions of mere play.
 Ritza, inform'd, to Brenner dar'd to say :
 “ Dear sir ! I dread to think your hopes are small,
 That future fame or fortune can repay
 Your daughter in her late directed call,
 To study for the Stage, exactor fierce to all.”

XXXVII.

“ I care not for the Stage,” said Brenner, “ save
 As truly it may show, high-wrought to me
 The Good, the Beautiful and True. When brave
 Stern Virtue reigns triumphant, and I see
 That Vice is punish'd most approvingly ;—
 Why should I doubt that Music in my child
 Will truly, innocently ask a free
 And cordial word upon a maiden mild,
 A friendly criticism upon Art undefil'd ? ”

XXXVIII.

"But time and money," fearless Ritza said,
 "Are call'd for, and the envious ones will sneer;
 And the voracious critics must be fed.
 The Public, many-headed tyrant near,
 Will think of former fav'rites, and be queer
 In singling out her weaknesses, until
 The town, tenacious of its rights, will fear
 To accord the measure of its secret will:
 Thus may her hopes and yours be cheated of their fill."

XXXIX.

"Not probable," said Brenner hopefully—
 "At least I will not think so, since I know
 That nothing in the realm of sound can be
 More touching to the heart of man below
 Than woman's trained voice, with words that flow
 In cheery cadence with her mind's best thought.
 It is pure crystal on a flake of snow;
 Or crimson cloud at sunset fully wrought
 To point us toward a heaven but dimly, faintly sought!"

XL.

These words upon the ear full sweetly fell
 Of Ericsson and Marie, close at hand;
 Ritza, reveal'd in dubious light, could tell
 Of trials, traitors, hypocrites as bland
 As mild May morning, but who could not stand
 The test of time and trouble—false away!
 "Good night!" said Brenner with calm self-command;
 "Good night!" said Marie, lingering like a ray
 Of starlight to the lovers, and "Adieu!" said they.

XLI.

Now Ericsson and Ritza tramp alone
 Beneath the shining of the silent stars ;
 The tender little toads and crickets own
 In gleesome roundelay of endless bars,
 The gentle gladness of a song which mars
 No present human thought nor human deed.
 But tireless in its tune, it never jars
 The youthful heart that faints not in its need,
 But quickens while it lightens both the lovers' speed.

XLII.

"Of Marie Brenner's voice what think you now?"
 Asked Ritza, hastening on his homeward way ;
 "It is a brilliant voice you will allow,"
 Said Ericsson, "and with it many a lay
 Of love and duty she will sing, and play
 With deepest sentiment upon each heart
 Whose ear, and taste, and sympathy shall weigh
 Her gifts in close detail, and ne'er depart
 In judgment of the whole, from Justice crowning Art."

XLIII.

But Ritza, heedless of the master's word,
 Still doubted, and repeated in cool strain :
 "And have you firmest faith she will be heard
 With favor by the public, who obtain
 New joy in young hopes blasted, and remain
 The patrons of old pets?" "Relentless man!"
 Sighed Ericsson, "I pray you to refrain
 From hasty judgment and dissuading ban,
 Until with ardor Marie shall disclose her plan."

XLIV.

“ My pupil has rare gifts that to my mind
 Rank higher than devotion to her art ;
 A word for truth, and filial love as kind
 As ever cheer'd the noblest maiden's heart.
 Her music shall be strengthened at the start
 By traits which reign forever, and rejoice,
 And shall rejoice all audience taking part
 In the glad triumphs of her fresh young voice :
 Remembering which you shall applaud her for her choice.”

XLV.

“ But Brenner has no wealth wherewith to meet
 The exactions of her training slow and long ;
 His airy castles built in moments sweet,
 Have shorter life than hath her fleetest song.
 And,” added Ritza, head and heart both wrong,—
 “ His eldest born and weakest of the three,
 Your friend, Charles Brenner, neither wise nor strong,
 Now lingers with a dread infirmity,
 Without one hope for earth or near futurity.”

XLVI.

“ Ritza, you err,” said Adam tearfully,
 Charles Brenner is the soul of manly love.
 A bright young brother has he been to me,
 While his sad spirit leads to thoughts above.
 Heaven send the Comforter, Divinest Dove !
 With bounteous blessings on his father's head ;
 A better man ne'er asked his God to approve
 Whate'er was faithful in the life he led :
 A loving, Christ-like life, of good men known and read.”

XLVII.

Ritza retorted not, but as he turn'd
 Toward home, express'd a weak and faint farewell
 Sullen he sought, while in his breast there burn'd
 Confusing thoughts he could not then dispel,
 To square by right the hopes he could not quell.
 It was a vain endeavor. Train'd to act
 In secret doubt of man, in spiteful spell,
 He car'd not if he either lov'd or lack'd :
 He was a law unto himself, instant in tact !

XLVIII.

No pity in his heart for brother's loss,
 It was that brother's weakness, let him cry !
 No cheering word for him who bears a cross
 Too heavy—let him bear it patiently !
 Ah ! mateless man ! a coming hour shall try
 Thine impious pride, and summon thee to speak
 Why thou hast built thine own dread pillory !
 Why thou consentest still in vain to seek
 For earthly happiness where all is cold and bleak !

XLIX.

Not thus toward home did Ericsson proceed :
 Fill'd with new thoughts of Art and Beauty's glow.
 He thank'd anew his father that his need
 Of early treatment of the high and low
 Was true as good, and thought of long ago.
 Frank to a fault and courteous to all,
 On all a kindly smile would he bestow.
 With conscience clear, while quick at duty's call,
 He went where'er such duty's loyal line might fall.

L.

He lov'd to see the expanding intellect
 Of younger students brighten'd by new bays ;
 He joy'd to talk with men of mark, erect
 In Art's high temple, 'neath Fame's sunniest rays.
 Seen over all a heavenly hand would raise
 Bright scenes of glory, to his soul the tie
 That binds true hearts in sympathy always,
 Through Harmony's holy, faithful ministry :
 And, link'd with love, longs for an immortality.

MARIE BRENNER:


PRIMA DONNA.

* * * * "Then wilt thou not be loth
 To leave this paradise, but shalt possess
 A paradise within thee, happier far."

—*John Milton, P. L., Book XII.*

CANTO SECOND.

I.


 OW lies a pale yet steadfast student now,
 Oppress'd by weakness, and borne down by pain ;
 His blue eye lustreless, his clear white brow,
 Sad signs of dread disease, portend the wane
 Of Nature's powers, while man still aids in vain.
 Where is thy youthful fire, young Brenner, where
 The full fruition of thy college reign ?
 What though thy laurel wreath were well to wear,
 Thou shouldst have sooner paus'd, thy failing form to spare.

II.

Wrapt in the lore of the reveréd Past,
 With high ideal of the Present's need,
 The student shatter'd, found himself at last
 Too poorly furnish'd for the Future's deed.
 Preceptor, parent, pupil, all agreed
 A sound mind in a body sound should be ;
 But youthful brain long forcéd to exceed
 Its healthful equilibrium, shall see
 A drear decay, bent body, sad sterility !

III.

It was a summer afternoon. The wind
 Blew softly toward the patient's pleasant room ;
 He look'd upon the river smooth to find
 A blesséd emblem of the heavenly bloom
 He might enjoy through faith. Could he assume
 The gladd'ning glory of a higher state ?
 O thought of comfort and sweet scene to illumine
 The long, last lingering of his final fate !
 A Christian crowning of a life of love, not hate.

IV.

But doubts like demons cross'd his burning brain :
 " Why should I, mother, suffer slow decay
 For sins of ancestry ? Are not my pain
 And agony the penalty always
 For my own sin ? " " They are, my son. To-day
 You suffer for yourself. But in the line
 Of life and accident of birth I may
 Engraft my fathers' sins as truly mine,
 And think God's law most human, and yet most divine."

V.

"Repentance for my own sad sin I feel,"
 Said Charles, "but shall my forcéd tears fast flow
 For sins of the long Past? Shall my appeal
 For mercy back to Eve's temptation go,
 And take in sins I can or cannot know?"
 "But how escape?" the tender mother said,
 "The curse is on us all—the primal woe—
 All who are by God's blesséd bounty fed,
 He saves the soul, but leaves this body dark and dead."

VI.

Now Margaret Brenner and young Ericsson
 Appear; the sister said: "Dear Charles, a friend."
 "Reviewing the old themes? Fights fought and won
 'Gainst sin and Satan?" said Adam. "I lend,"
 Said Charles, "small ear to any words which tend
 To set forth abstract sin; but thoughts of mine
 On my forefathers' sins I cannot send
 Or banish to oblivion, or twine
 With faintest ray of hope or happiness to shine."

VII.

"The justice of my God in sending me,
 With feeble form into this whirling world,
 I question not. It is not hard to see
 The obvious cause in wisdom fully furl'd,
 Although the tempter oft his arrows hurl'd
 And humbled me. My days and nights I gave
 To study, that new wealth might be impearl'd
 In my mind's mint, that I might rightly save
 My reason for my faith when near'd the narrow grave."

VIII.

“ But when the sins of my forefathers lie
 In dim, and dread, bewildering array ;
 When through varieties of birth I try
 My race, and face the curse in every way,—
 How reconcile God’s goodness with the day
 Of Last Account? Can my poor lonely pain
 Avail aught to disturb the surer stay
 Of measures meant to wash out older stain?
 Can my good Maker slay me for my fathers’ gain?”

IX.

“ Far be it from Him!” said Ericsson. “ To doubt
 His goodness is to doubt your life. The earth
 And all created things might be shut out,—
 God’s goodness still would be. Our later birth
 Is but the sign of man’s eternal worth
 In His high view. Our souls, His living breath,
 Repose in bliss, and leave but dreary dearth
 For harass’d hopes and desolating death ;
 But live by faith in Heav’n’s truth, our Saviour saith.”

X.

“ And more seems clear. Our known forefathers’ sins ;
 One man’s despair, another’s joy of life ;
 The child’s few days, while other long life wins ;
 One mind clear-eyed, another craz’d with strife ;
 And all the world with wrong and folly rife :
 These are the well-defin’d inquietudes
 Of sin and our low state. The sharpen’d knife
 Of reason, and the eye of faith in moods
 Of heav’n-born power shall scatter them in myriad broods.”

XI.

“If Satan bid you curse your God and die,
 Job-like still trust in Him, even though He slay;
 If Science seek to know the reason why
 You still believe—bid Nature’s wearier way
 And Science speed; but God’s eternal ray
 Of light and love, of beauty, justice crown’d
 With goodness and with power, shall still display
 His right to hold the second causes found
 In all creation, to His perfect will are bound.”

XII.

“Go to the garden of Gethsemane;
 Go to the cross”—“O friend!” said Charles, “forbear;
 I am a wretched man, and would not be
 More miserable: my offences wear
 Upon my spirit with a cruel care.
 Since God spar’d not the just for the unjust,
 How can the unjust live? And will He spare
 My wand’ring soul from the unconscious dust,
 If in His blessed promises I place my trust?”

XIII.

“A thousand times, belovéd brother, aye!
 Pour out again thy penitential moan;
 Thy God, thy Saviour hears thy filial cry,
 And will not crush thee in thy grief alone.
 Now minist’ring angels watch thee as their own,
 Elect of God, and candidate for heaven;
 The Everlasting Arms are round thee thrown;
 Thine Elder Brother death’s dark door hath riven,
 And through Him endless immortality is given.”

XIV.

So spake the ardent Adam. Charles, resign'd,
 A moment motionless, then calmly spoke :
 " Where are the youthful hopes that came to bind
 My earlier tasks with manhood's heavier yoke ?
 How can I dare to wish for or invoke
 The aid of Heaven on manhood's later plans ?
 Or how rejoice my father's heart of oak,
 Or lighten labor for my mother's hands ?
 But God's high will be done, and not poor prostrate man's."

XV.

His mother turn'd to hide a starting tear,
 His sister bathed his burning brow again ;
 While Ericsson stood watching like a seer,
 And sooth'd the sufferer with a deep amen.
 " Where is my father ?" And that father then
 Just gain'd the garden gate, with Marie near.
 They had been walking, and with thankful ken
 Survey'd each beauty of the river clear,
 And weigh'd the chances of a new and strange career.

XVI.

Who though those chances seem not near at hand,
 And grave dark doubts and hindrances appear ?
 A loving father's will and heart shall stand
 Protecting till is won the guerdon dear.
 A mother pleads against the task with fear ;
 A sister trembles at the public gaze ;
 A failing brother's protest fills the ear,
 And hints at danger in the drama's ways :
 But father, daughter plann'd for brighter, happier days.

XVII.

Retiring to the music-room, the four
 Leave Charles and Marg'ret, and they urge a claim.
 Now Adam Ericsson essays once more
 To guard his pupil and her work from blame.
 "The higher forms of art alway the same,
 Reveal to me unbroken beauty's line ;
 To me the Greek can father all the fame
 Of numbering vibrations with the Nine,
 Whereof all later harmony is the sounding sign."

XVIII.

"Chaldean lore, Egyptian mystery,
 Assyrian grandeur and Phœnician zeal,
 Found in Hellenic hand the cunning key
 Which lock'd these treasures in one common weal,
 And bade all nature join Apollo's peal.
 In Pyramid, in Parthenon, in all
 The eye can see, ear hear, or heart can feel,
 A perfect concord reign'd, which seem'd to fall
 Like tones from Memnon's mouth at early morning call."

XIX.

"Then in the church a higher plane was found,
 From Jubal down to Miriam ;—stretching thence,
 To Deborah and Hannah, and the crown'd
 And daring David. But the change, immense
 From outward to the deeper inward sense !
 From visible to the invisible :
 When Christian souls in prisons gave offence,
 By singing of deliverance from hell
 And man's devices through God's mighty miracle !"

XX.

"In caves and dens the Spirit calm'd each heart
 With fullest foretaste of a heav'n begun ;
 The cross, the pyre, the bloody ax, the smart
 Of persecutions direr than which none
 The world hath ever seen, were cast upon
 God's chosen ones. But mid the murderous roar
 Of fierce and clashing combatants, the sun
 Of faith shone clearly on their ebbing gore,
 And led them shouting joy unto the Heavenly Shore."

XXI.

"O true fulfillment of the Saviour's word!
 O last pure act of pious constancy!
 Shall kings still dally when the call is heard
 That lifts their thought toward God's infinity?
 Hark! 'tis a sound of Christian victory!
 A Constantine, a Theodosius seen
 With numerous and rich array, will be
 The champions of the hated Nazarene!
 Lord! let them on Thy heavenly power forever lean."

XXII.

"See near and far the Christian spire and dome,
 Symbolic window and the marble nave:
 Hear from aloft a chant of heavenly home,
 Ambrosian-ton'd and prophet-voic'd to save.
 Sad soul, receive the gift thy Maker gave,
 'And all that is within thee bless His name.'
 He will not leave thee in the silent grave,
 But send His angel with the fond acclaim:
 'Hold fast the life for which thy sorrowing Saviour came.'"

XXIII.

"Along the centuries that perennial word
 Cheer'd harrow'd human hearts unceasingly ;
 In church, at home, and ever where was heard
 The voice of prayer and praise, it left them free
 To stand and plead for Gospel liberty.
 With chant and choral none might dare defer
 To march and shield full faithfully,
 From Paynim power the holy sepulchre,
 Each one for Jesu's sake a willing worshiper."

XXIV.

"The peace and order which the Christian drew
 From secret study of his Master's will,
 Arous'd alway a holier hope to do
 Far more in His high honor, to fulfill
 An earlier promise, made with youthful thrill,
 To consecrate the whole of life to him.
 A Raphael limn'd ; an Angelo to instill
 A love of heav'nly forms, charg'd to the brim
 Fair beauty's urn, while Palestrina roll'd his hymn."

XXV.

"While sounds that hymn, see! one from Erfurt flies
 To spread its ringing radiance o'er his land ;
 Behold a Bach, whose technic finger ties
 The hand to chords that shall forever stand!
 The imperial Handel with supreme command
 Now towers above the late and earlier one ;
 Dear father Haydn, and Mozart with wand
 Of magic point to weird Beethoven, lone
 And mysterious, near the master Mendelssohn."

XXVI.

"It is the grand procession of Tone-Kings,
 Whose music charms the cultur'd Christian ear:
 Strict music wedded to wise word which brings
 Soul comfort for the afflicted one to hear."
 And Adam paus'd. His retrospect sincere
 Brought clear conviction to each musing mind.
 Elias Brenner ever did revere
 The immortal masters; and he fain would find
 A song to soothe a sadden'd son, in doubt confin'd.

XXVII.

Then Adam found the "Hear ye Israel,"
 From the "Elijah," which his pupil sang;
 With rare intent and energy did dwell
 On each succeeding phrase, until it rang
 As though a cherub might on seraph hang,
 To seek admission through the heav'nly gate:
 Swift to the solace then the singer sprang—
 "Be not afraid;" and from his low estate
 A brother breath'd his gratitude with sigh sedate.

XXVIII.

Once more a father ask'd for sympathy
 And prolongation of the genial hour;
 His daughter, glad to give her ministry
 Of love, sang with a fresh and new-born power,
 "I know that my Redeemer liveth:"—flower
 Of Handel pure and fragrant evermore.
 How like a calm and gracious evening shower
 Fell drops of melody in varied store,
 That left each list'ner with a full heart to adore.

XXIX.

"Thou art the Way, the Truth, the Life,"—a hymn
 In which all join with conscious penitence,
 Portends the evening's close, when twilight dim
 Shuts out the sunset's mild magnificence.
 The list'ning student, haply with a sense
 Of growing hopes, but torturing, burning pain,
 Prays for full faith and larger innocence ;
 His father, one with him in heart and brain,
 Gives outward utterance to his soul-felt needs again.

XXX.

"Lord God most merciful, and yet most true!
 Regard with loving eye Thy children here ;
 Let not the world or Satan snatch the due
 Thy rightful Name demands. In every sphere
 Thou sendest blessings without number, ere
 Thy creatures know their deep significance ;
 Lead us to think and act that with a clear
 Firm heart we feel thy holy countenance
 Reviving our weak powers to new allegiance."

XXXI.

"Peace to a mother's warm fidelity!
 Peace to my daughters' duteous life of love!
 Peace, Heavenly Father, in adversity,
 To him who hopes for blissful life above ;
 Spare him, if Thou be willing, till he prove
 A faithful servant in Thy holy way :
 And on our dearest friend, where'er he move,
 A special blessing wilt Thou hear me say :
 For our Redeemer's sake, God bless us all, we pray."

XXXII.

That one most precious evening pass'd too soon,
 Yet not without the Spirit's touch of fire,
 Which flam'd forever as a priceless boon
 In souls enliven'd by the same desire.
 The morning brought a stronger will for higher
 And steadier purpose in each earthly task ;
 An unseen power which bade them all aspire
 To vict'ries which they had not dar'd to ask :
 No more they walk in darkness, living light to mask.

XXXIII.

The loving Adam bade them all farewell ;
 His field of duty lay 'mid other scenes ;
 By study only could he hope to dwell
 Securely where the Master call'd for means
 And place for worship, on which largely leans
 The Church. Faith without works is void and lost,
 And barren emptiness most surely weans
 The child of God from effort at large cost.
 He must acquirements make to win the sad sin-toss'd.

XXXIV.

While to the Sacred Word he thirsting bends
 In fullest force his best thoughts willingly ;
 His apt art-scholar, Marie Brenner, lends
 To Music all her soul would dare to be.
 "My cherish'd master, when you bid me see
 A holier beauty than in lovelorn lays
 Pervading heavenly harmony,—then free
 From youth's first thralldom, I would spend my days
 Impersonating this blest truth to human gaze."

XXXV.

"There may be those who doubt my new resolve,
 There may come lovers who will seek my hand ;
 But trusty Time my secret will evolve,
 And leave me happy in my self-command.
 Let railers wait, and suitors fond demand
 No greater notice than civility,
 Should I ascend no higher than to land
 'Mid those who foster faint ability,—
 Let the deserv'd reproach fall ever upon me."

XXXVI.

"My father's brother at the capital,
 With ample wealth my future training bears :
 I go to-morrow, at this cheering call,
 Awaiting all his generous heart declares.
 But wheresoe'er I go, whatever cares
 May come, thine oft-repeated words shall be
 Like mercy music fill'd with golden airs
 Of gracious condescension unto me,
 Seal'd with a never-ending gratitude to thee."

XXXVII.

They parted. Ah! in each vicissitude
 Of life, what comfort can a mortal know
 More dear than young hearts' precious plenitude
 Of thanks they ne'er forget, but swiftly show ?
 It is the teacher's chief delight below,
 It is the parent's joy by night and day ;
 The man of God by this in strength shall grow ;
 All angels smile when thankful children pray :
 And God himself is pleas'd with grateful souls away.

XXXVIII.

Transported to the city's noisy throng,
 In social station easy and secure :
 With a mix'd multitude oft borne along,
 Serene a lyric artiste may endure,
 When fortified by conscience white and pure.
 There is a strength in steady labor too,
 Which Satan seeing, stands a lame pursuer ;
 Repuls'd, unnerv'd in all he dares to do,
 He shrinks, then leaves with Belial and his callous crew.

XXXIX.

Tito Marcello, from the seven-hill'd Rome,
 Maestro, leader, player soon ador'd,
 The school'd soprano as he did the home
 Of melody, his blest Italia. Stor'd
 With vivid mem'ries, charged with many a word
 Of true tradition in his mother tongue,
 He bade his scholar freshening rills to ford,
 And loftier hights to climb, until among
 The flexile-voicéd queens of song she daily sung.

XL.

A rapid run from methods strict to free ;
 A sudden gathering in of richest gems ;
 A language laden with the melody
 That links the West with Orient diadems.
 A subtle scent of beauty which o'erwhelms
 The youthful heart with dreams of ecstasy ;
 Yet deems prosaic all that heart condemns,
 And owns the Present all the legacy
 That tropic time, and sky, and story guarantee.

XLI.

At every turn a beaded balustrade,
 And higher up a tower and parapet ;
 Beneath, a stream hid by the trees in shade,
 Whereon the stately swan oft-times was set.
 Green groves not far, wherein a tangled net
 Of foliage harbor'd birds black, red and green,
 Whose song and plumage charm'd, like the coquette
 Who changes carriage, voice and eye to mean
 All that a lingering look, or word, or hand can glean.

XLII.

Yet in the church this foreign master saw
 The cause, the working, and the end of things ;
 That Father, Son and Spirit ever draw
 The hearts of men to Heav'n as on the wings
 Of angels, 'mid whose willing welcome rings
 A rapturous joy o'er sinners penitent ;
 Our Lady magnifies her Lord, and sings
 Of her blest state through mercy mildly lent ;
 And saints of every age live through a Saviour sent.

XLIII.

High Art its holiest efforts here achieved ;
 And poet, painter, sculptor sought to wed
 His work to Christian truth, and he believed
 No manlier motive could prevail instead.
 And touching Music, the full fountain-head
 Of all its inspiration, all its tune
 Arose within the church, and thence it spread
 By minstrel, maid, and harlequin, till soon
 They sang in mysteries, and danc'd a rigadoun !

XLIV.

Whate'er in nature wins by charging views ;
 Whate'er in art may captivate the eye ;
 Whate'er in fact or fancy one may choose
 To bring into poetic unity ;
 Heroic action, and the baffled lie ;
 Contending parties and triumphant truth ;
 Malignant motive and warm charity ;
 The retrospect of age, the hope of youth ;
 All these and more may Music blend in rightful ruth.

XLV.

The curious critic sees no sense in this ;
 With him the pious anchorite agrees ;
 This one would rob the soul of many a bliss,
 While that lives but to suffer, not to please.
 The true conservative alone decrees
 That wise variety in life is sweet ;
 The bending branches of the tallest trees
 Present no two alike, yet make a meet
 And mantling mellow shade in fierce midsummer's heat.

XLVI.

Why should not mark'd and ever varying tone
 Convey to human ear what passion shows ?
 The twittering songsters of the torrid zone
 Make merry music where the lion goes.
 The tireless brooklet laughs as thunder flows
 Through resonant air pierc'd by electric force ;
 From cricket cry to elephantine throes,
 All nature heaves with new and strong resource—
 Pan's prototype of band and vocal intercourse.

XLVII.

Precursors of the Opera! Start not,
 Uncompromising Puritan! Your child
 Will ask for new delights without the blot
 Of growing sympathy for sin and wild
 Delusions; for young hearts were ne'er beguil'd
 By truthful pictures of our mortal span:
 Else were the Bible through defiance styl'd
 A harmful book, and under saintly ban;
 Since man's fell ill is seen on every page we scan.

XLVIII.

So Tito talk'd, and conquer'd every doubt
 Of mother, brother, sister and of friend;
 His pupil dreaded not the coming out,
 But hop'd and dream'd success unto the end.
 Excelling in a part which well would blend
 The tragic with the social element,
 She chose the impassion'd Norma, to contend
 With agonizing tone against the intent
 Of heartless man to ensnare and blast the innocent.

XLIX.

"A bold but fitting choice, and calling deep,"
 Observed Marcello, "for sustain'd repose;
 The Druid priestess with a soulful sweep,
 Appeals for mercy 'mid increasing woes.
 Who would not weep, and seek to interpose
 A sheltering arm for injur'd woman's breast,
 In manly effort against all her foes?
 And lend a hope that yet in lasting rest,
 She might enjoy a happy home in regions blest?"

L.

"You have the face, you have the form, and more,
 You have the voice and clear intelligence,
 Whereby the noble Norma, quick to pour
 Her piteous plaints, would charm each living sense,
 And change our mercy to love's redolence.
 I have the Pollio, in whose eager eye
 There lurks a dark and matchless impudence ;
 Whose tenor cleaves the distance like the cry
 Of Cossack or of Zouave fir'd with battle high !"

LI.

"A Russian Hebrew, void of faith, once train'd
 This Pollio in all sinuous, wicked ways,
 Wherein no present God nor Christ was gain'd,
 But all was thoughtless, voiceless of his praise.
 Born out of time, and place, and proper days,
 This offspring of the patriarch Abraham,
 Accepted Nature in her every phase,
 And counted Revelation but a sham ;
 While in his daily walk he seem'd a guileless lamb."

LII.

"A winning wretch of atheistic drift
 Whose words had wreck'd his pupil in despair,
 But that I snatch'd him from the current swift
 That would have borne him to the vortex where
 In poison'd pools of pleasure he would dare
 To end a life all profitless and brief.
 To-morrow you shall see with what an air
 He'll sing, and walk, and talk, and act the chief
Tenore at your coming début with a bold belief."

LIII.

The morrow came, and with it flying hours
 All glist'ning with a silver-lined light;
 Marcello surely mov'd, and girt with powers
 Unusual, gave direction with delight.
 "Now Norma toward her Pollio I invite
 To closer sympathy:"—scarce had he said,
 When "Ritza!" "Marie!" in astonish'd sight,
 Burst from their lips, by anxious accents sped,
 Transfixing each as by a secret, sudden dread.

LIV.

A hurried greeting! Then baton in hand,
 Marcello led his skill'd interpreters,
 The orchestra,—a chosen, brilliant band.
 In vivid union with each act that stirs
 The men of strings, and wood, and trumpeters,
 Till all seem'd charg'd with trembling harmonies,
 That cheer'd the heart with hope's swift couriers,
 And made it long for joys which quickly please,
 As eye, hand, lip and tongue the nimble note would seize.

LV.

One strain of mingled dignity and awe,
 That might have marshal'd Moses toward the land
 Of promise from the scorn'd Egyptian law,
 Fell on the ear. And the Arch Druid's hand
 Was rais'd toward heav'n, as with a look all bland
 He call'd for curses on the Roman name.
 Now fiery Pollio with disgrace would brand
 Barbaric hosts through quick defeat and shame;
 While o'er unlawful love he burn'd perpetual flame.

LVI.

A deft recitative,—and Norma sings
 The *Casta Diva*, melody divine!
 Marcello, with a glance at score, now clings
 In tearful sympathy with every line.
 The players catch her welcome warbling to enshrine
 With all dear memories of youth and home—
 As if the lily and the eglantine
 Should join to perfume life where'er they roam,
 Or by the mountain side, or by the salt sea foam.

LVII.

O youth! O Love! O Melody! O Life!
 With what an endless chain you bind us here!
 Yet are ye angels 'mid Earth's surging strife,
 Who stand as heav'nly sentinels to cheer.
 A father's early life shall re-appear
 In the young being who now sees his face;
 Whose voice, and smile, and kindness with each year
 Shall of his former trials leave no trace,
 But color his last days with hues of heav'nly grace.

LVIII.

The light of beauty, and the soft repose
 Of graceful women prais'd by cultur'd men,
 Pervaded the fill'd house; and serried vows
 Of dainty *dilletanti*, list'ning then,
 Vouchsaf'd their choice applause impulsive, when
 "A new creation of the Tragic Muse!"
 These critics cried; and straightway with the pen
 Announc'd a matchless Norma as the news
 Which morning, myriad-tongued, to millions must diffuse.

LIX.

And Ritza's Pollio! Importunate,
 And proud as Cæsar at the Rubicon;
 He urg'd an Adalgisa to her fate
 With all the ardor of Napoleon.
 Not brave Miltiades at Marathon
 Withstood the charges of the Persian host
 With a more kingly front than did this son
 Of Mercury the threat of Norma, most
 Repentant and seraphic at her dying post.

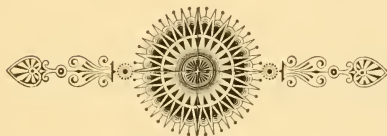
LX.

And Marie Brenner sings in other lands,
 And other rôles essays successfully;
 Where King or Kaiser, Queen or Prince commands,
 Alike she wins her place enchantingly;
 With regal honors clad, come cordially
 The gold, the jewels, infinite largess,
 From genial gentry and nobility;
 Until, returning her fair home to bless,
 There seems no limit to her earthly happiness.

LXI.

Time brings slight change in quiet Annville,
 Save to increase the father's old estate,
 Which, chang'd, improv'd through Marie's generous will,
 Grows far more brightly than at earlier date.
 Still runs the river gladly to the sea;
 The birds in Spring by larger numbers mate,
 And sing their songs with fuller, merrier glee,
 While o'er the villa yet the elm waves gracefully.

But sister Margaret wedded Ericsson,
 The man of God and rector now ordain'd ;
 And Brenner smiled with fresh delight upon
 A bright-eyed darling boy who daily reign'd
 A king in his strong arms, where peace remain'd.
 A mother sigh'd, although her eldest born
 Redeem'd and happy, paradise had gained ;
 And Marie whisper'd of the lone hearts torn
 Which shall be gladden'd at the resurrection morn.




JULIAN & CONSTANTINUS.

JULIAN AND CONSTANTIUS, A. D. 354.

Cantata for Men's Voices, composed for the Mendelssohn Union.

Aria: JULIAN.

EE the Python flee Apollo,
Crush'd beneath a god's advances!
See Arion fleetly follow
Where a dolphin seaward glances!
Music then was heaven-directed,
Soothing everything to gladness,
In a day when men affected
By their love, forgot their sadness.
Where are now the deeds of daring
Hercules and Hector render'd,
Who, for love and beauty caring,
Ne'er to man or beast surrender'd?
Even Joshua's words revived us,
Even David sang of glory;
Hebrew, Greek, yea both contrived us
Scenes for many a song and story.

Chorus.

Hail! Hail! Aurora!
Thou heav'nly light that revealeth
Charm'd rays to Flora,
And ev'ry green plant that appealeth:
Eye of Creation!
To all other eyes the fore-runner!

Take our oblation,
As the flower, the zephyr that won her.
Hail! Hail! Diana!
In forest and field ever reigning;
Fertile Savanna,
And mountain and covert regaining.
Clymene calling,
And thy Polydora attending;
Heav'n's music falling,
All Nature her gladness is lending!

Aria: JULIAN: and Chorus.

Mars, Mars forever
Invincible hosts is commanding!
War endeth never,
While Right from the Wrong is demanding
Trophies of vict'ry,
And vows that shall never be broken:
Gods! then be ye nigh,
Till Mars his last word shall have spoken.

Recit: CONSTANTIUS.

O Julian! I shall not measure swords,
Nor take the chance of failure in the chase,
Nor challenge higher love for nature's forms
With thee, who art so near the plenitude
Of intellect and culture. I rather breathe
A simple prayer for the blest cause of peace;
For the sweet hope of life beyond the grave;
And for the dearer thought of seeing Him,
My Lord and Master whom I serve. Gaunt war
And all its cruel crimes may cease for aye;
The din of noisy pleasure may decline,
And only milder, chaster joys remain.

Aria: CONSTANTIUS.

O Father! the soft voice I heard
Was heaven unto me ;
My erring heart, then quickly stirr'd
New homage paid to Thee.
I cannot think, I cannot feel,
Without Thy constant aid ;
My very breath is but Thy seal
Of life upon me laid.
I came not here by mine own will,
I shall not hence take leave,
Without Thy Spirit near me still,
To solace and relieve.

Aria: CONSTANTIUS: *and Chorus*.

O Jesu! Thou hast promis'd me
The life that shall not cease ;
That promise shall my soul set free,
And bring unending peace.



CHRISTMAS TIDE.

CHRISTMAS TIDE.

I.

THE day is dark and in the East
A leaden mist appears ;
Outside a wail, inside a feast
That shines 'mid hopes and fears.

II.

In bidding last farewell to all
The old quick passing hours,
Stern Nature grimly bends to call
Our rudest, fiercest powers.

III.

Sparse tufts of grass do still remind
Of Summer's golden joys ;
While falls the rain, the cutting wind
The poor, pale leaf destroys.

IV.

These mournful messengers rehearse
In sombre monotone,
The burthen of my simple verse,—
The year, the year is gone !

V.

God of my life! O leave me not
 In darkness, doubt and fear;
 Without Thy light, the dearest lot
 Were only madness here.

VI.

The years may pass, the seasons roll
 In unremember'd flight;
 While Nature echoes to the Soul
 My wanderings from Thy sight.

VII.

The day is dark, and in the East
 The shades of evening fall;
 And gloomier clouds have now increas'd
 The approaching night's black pall.

VIII.

One ray alone shines clearly through
 The gathering mists of years;
 One Star pales not, but ever new
 Dispels my darkest fears.

IX.

O soaring Intellect! O Pride!
 Look at that Living Star,
 And in its heavenly light confide,
 To lead thee home from far.

X.

And thou, less subtle child of song,
 Come with me to the place
 Where love-attuned souls prolong
 The angelic words of grace :

XI.

“Glory to God on high, on earth
 Be peace, good will toward men ;”
 They sing it with a heavenly mirth,
 Till the long aisles ring again !

XII.

The only harmony that falls
 From voices tuned above ;
 It cheers to Heav'n ! From Heav'n it calls !
 It speaks Emanuel's love !

XIII.

God of my life ! How sweet the joy
 That crowns this gift of Thine !
 Thou hast not left me to destroy
 My only hope divine.

XIV.

Cold is bleak Nature's drear despair,
 The wind, the cloud, the rain ;
 But in my home, what light is there
 To soften every pain.

XV.

A loving wife ; two gleesome boys ;
A daughter fair and mild ;
A baby, centre of all joys,—
“ His mother’s darling child.”

XVI.

A cheerful fire ; a simple board ;
With trees, and toys, and books ;
The very air is deftly stor’d
With fairy thoughts and looks.

XVII.

The fairy thoughts of pleasant youth,
The looks of lov’d ones gone ;
The echoes of their tones of truth
Come sounding, one by one.

XVIII.

And so the Christmas Tide is past,
“ Glory to God on high ! ”
O let the sacred anthem last,
And Christ be ever nigh.



The Two Angels.

THE TWO ANGELS.

I.

It is a quiet winter day,
The fleecy snow is falling ;
I wander up the whiten'd way,
Upon a sister calling.

II.

I gaze upon a picture fair,
A boy and girl are sleeping ;
A mother looks upon the pair,
And turns in sorrow weeping.

III.

Two guardian angels standing near
The lov'd ones, now attend them ;
With wings and forms that know no fear,
Forever to defend them.

IV.

O Prophet-Artist! By what power
Hast thou this scene presented ?
And is she dead, thy first sweet flower ?
And hath thy heart consented ?

V.

Hast seen thy darling breathe his last,
And felt thy prayer avail'd not?
Hast mark'd where death again hath pass'd,
And yet hast thou bewail'd not?

VI.

O dearly lov'd! From earth's alarms,
Twin angels snatch'd before us!
Blest Saviour! Take them to Thine arms,
And reign Thou ever o'er us.




SUNSET AT BELLEVUE.

SUNSET AT BELLEVUE,

LAKE CHAMPLAIN.

I.

 O! in the western skies appear
The purple tints of Summer's dying day;
The emblazon'd clouds are hovering near
To catch one parting, sadd'ning, ling'ring ray.

II.

Clear is the blue hills' airy hight,
The lake serene, and its reflected aisle;
What mirror'd beauty! Soothing sight,
Like infant revelling in its mother's smile!

III.

Slily the Saranac slips in,
Afar where plays the summer breeze the while;
Careering ripples die within
The deeper current of the lone Lamoille.

IV.

These placid waters heard the roar
Of battle in the fiercer days gone by ;
But lake and river nevermore
May echo with war's yell and musketry.

V.

Type of the Christian's peaceful heart,
O quiet lake of brightness beautiful !
Though cares may ruffle, friends depart,
Its God will calm and make it dutiful.

VI.

Pure, living streams of mercy glide
Where stagnant seem the darksome depths below ;
Glad Hope sits on the silver tide
That flows in heav'n's light, heav'n's rest to know.



SIRES OF 'SEVENTY-SIX



SIRES OF 'SEVENTY-SIX.

I.

WHILE yet Columbia's hardy sons
Dwelt 'neath a foreign yoke,—
Voices were heard, the high-soul'd ones
For freedom boldly spoke :

II.

“ Vain is the menace ! ” Thus they cry—
“ Of England's lordly hand ;
We've breath'd the vow to live or die
For God and Freedom's land.”

III.

Unskill'd in arms, the daring few
Are rushing to the foe !
Already vict'ry's in their view,
And British hosts laid low !

IV.

The shout has gone from Lexington,
 And Bunker Hill replies !
 The South has sent her Washington,
 And all the land defies !

V.

'Tis done ! Th' achievement glorious !
 The Declaration's signed !
 Columbia's sons victorious
 A home and freedom find.

VI.

Brave men ! Your hearts were strong in God,
 Your faith, it lasted long ;
 Else writhing 'neath oppression's rod,
 We still should feel its wrong.

VII.

Degenerate sons of noble sires !
 How callous have we grown !
 Our hearts have lost their wonted fires,—
 They're like the sculptured stone

VIII.

That stands above our fathers' tomb,
 The tale is merely read ;
 While all around seems but the room
 And dwelling of the dead.

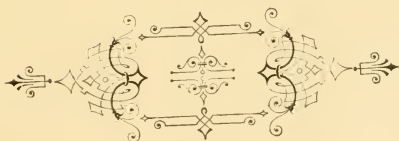
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IX.

Thus had I mus'd in youthful years,
 When Traffic rul'd the hour;
 Baptiz'd anew, the Nation's tears
 Give signs of purer power.

X.

Power that shall blast in burning rays
 The men who dare but mix
 One act of treason with our days,
 O Sons of 'SEVENTY-SIX!



FREEMEN, RISE!

FREEMEN, RISE ! YOUR BRETHREN CALL.

I.

Solo.

FREEMEN, rise ! your brethren call,
Call from cot and palace hall ;
Nerve your arm and cheer your heart,
Heart that scorns a traitor's part !
Dare to breathe the prayer of faith,
Faith in God who reigns and saith :
"Trust in me, and I will save."
Father ! save from rebel's grave !

Chorus.

Save our country ! Save us all !
All who heed the loyal call ;
North and South, and East and West,
Save where'er Thy name is blest.

II.

Solo.

Strong hath been our love of gain,
Gain that goads and leaves its stain ;
Gold and goods and precious land
Thou hast dealt with lavish hand.
Father ! we have thought of these,
These, and not Thy high decrees !
Perish then each earthly plan,
Keep us true to Thee and man.

Chorus : Save our country ! &c.

III.

Solo.

Take our gold, yea ! take our life
In all high and holy strife ;
We have naught that is not Thine,
Soul, and Body, Life Divine !
Hold each struggling arm this hour,
Cheer each soul with Thine own power,
Power that holds immensity !
Father ! bid us look to Thee.

Chorus : Save our country ! &c.




DECORATION DAY.

O DAY OF LOVING MEMORIES!

Song for Decoration Day.

I.

 DAY of loving memories!
When hearts that mourn again unite
In tenderness to strengthen ties
Made holier by Time's rapid flight!
Years cannot change the sweet perfume
Of lily, rose, forget-me-not!
The soldier's tomb shall therefore bloom
With flowers to mark the sacred spot.

II.

O brave, dear souls whose early fate
Secur'd our homes from with'ring blight;
Shall not the sav'd and grateful State
Remember long thy bloody fight?
Again bring flow'rs, bring sweetest flow'rs
To grace their green and honor'd graves;
Rest one day in the year's quick hours
Where lilies bloom and cypress waves.

III.

When we are old, and times have chang'd,
Our children shall the prayer renew,
That on this day shall be arrang'd
The stately line and floral view ;
The line of living souls who feel
That Heav'n is watching by their side ;
While fragrant incense shall reveal
The patriot's love for those who died.



THE CONTINENTALS.

ON HEARING FOUR VOCALISTS

DRESS'D IN CONTINENTAL COSTUME.

THEY err who say our fathers are forgot ;
Their names, their sacrifice, their noble deeds ;
Where Liberty first planted deathless seeds,
Some hearts there are yet mark and love the spot.
Whether at Lexington he falter'd not,
Or bled, the martyr'd one, at Bunker Hill,
Be sure, in after time his name shall fill
Each minstrel's heart with joy, in every clime.
Lo! trimly clad in garb of those great days,
They sing the song that prompts my humble praise.
Valiant young singers ! Ye recall the time
When my brave grandsire march'd, and fought, and won !
Sing on ! sing often of that fiery prime
When angels guarded our blest Washington.

AD FRATREM.

AD FRATREM.



DEAR Charles! In whose blue eye there shineth yet
The merry twinkle that our father had,
Which lit our home through fortune good or bad;
Step back with me through paths where oft are set
The forms and faces we can ne'er forget.
I see them all! O faithful memory!
Death cannot snatch thy constant guard o'er me;
The years pass by; in tears and sad regret
Through thee I summon all, and they appear!
We pass the beaver dam, the fragrant pines,
And leave the cool, still woodland for the clear;
O'er fields of waving wheat and rye there shines
The clearest summer sun of all the year;
And bird, and bee, and stream sing through our lines!

KATIE.

TO KATIE.

A Little Orphan.

I.

ATIE, winsome, motherless,
Sweet songs could sing ;
 Sought a kiss, a soft caress,
For everything !

II.

Every motion full of grace,
And every smile ;
All her soul shone in her face
In the meanwhile.

* * * * *

III.

In a quiet little grave
Katie's asleep ;
Where the fragrant cedars wave,
And vigils keep.

IV.

Like a flower that buds in June
For quick decay ;
Buds and blossoms, and too soon
Passes away !

V.

Thus her short and sorrowing days
Sped full of truth ;
Could not death have made delays,
And left her youth ?

VI.


Father ! Let Thy will be done,
Take her to Thee ;
And when my short race is run,
Remember me !



CHILDHOOD MEMORIES.

CHILDHOOD MEMORIES

I.

 REMEMBER the words and tune
Of one sweet ballad that my mother used to sing,
Looking up at the chaste full moon,
While I sat 'neath the elm tree near the limpid spring ;
It was in the glad time of June,
And the evening pass'd sadly soon.

II.

I remember, that same elm tree
Once held an artless singer whose clear ringing trill,
In the morn at the hour of three,
So pierc'd my soul by his silvery whippowil,
That I whisper'd rejoicingly,
God's angel is gladdening me !

III.

I remember the grand old drum,
So stoutly play'd through the village by blithesome John,
When the Fourth of July had come ;
How quickly cours'd the young blood of my heart, as on
And afar I march'd, like some
Undaunted General Thomas Thumb !

IV.

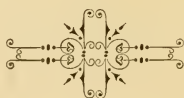
I remember the full voic'd choir,
Where Uncle William play'd the organ sweet and clear,
And I turn'd me round to admire
The lady in chinchilla hat, who rous'd my fear
By her flashing eyes, while rising higher,
She sang with a celestial fire.

V.

I remember the Easter Morn,
When look'd the man of God so lovingly on all,
That new and brighter faith was born,—
To man's sad soul a perpetual festival!
And the choir sang anew that morn,
Christ from the grave and death is torn.

VI.

I remember the evening psalm,
When the circle form'd around the pleasant fireside;
And I dwelt in the holy calm
Which I hop'd, alas! would forever there abide,
Yet like a precious, healing balm,
Comes back the thought of that evening psalm.



IN MEMORY

OF

WASHINGTON M. SMITH.

ODE


SUNG IN MEMORY OF

WASHINGTON M. SMITH,

Principal of Grammar School No. 35, New York.

I.

Solo.

 **T**HERE we part, sad tribute pay
To the treasur'd past,
When in life's sweet younger day
Our good lot was cast
With the lov'd one, in these halls,
Where his name yet gently falls,
Where his voice still seems to say—
“Dear disciple, come away.”

Chorus.

Come, while yet the fire of youth
Glistens in each eye ;
Smile upon all heavenly truth,
Truth that ne'er shall die.

II.

Solo.

Brother student, let the call
 Touch each glowing heart ;
Let the still voice say to all,
 Act a nobler part.
Pray, like him, for higher life,
Strive, like him, with holier strife :—
Hark ! his voice still seems to say—
“ Dear disciple, come away.”

Chorus.

Come, while yet the fire of youth
 Glistens in each eye ;
Smile upon all heavenly truth,
 Truth that ne'er shall die.




MY TEACHER.

WHAT MY TEACHER IS TO ME.

Recited by

MISS IDA AUSTIN.

I.

EARCH the annals of the past,
Scan its leaders, first to last ;
Patriarch, prophet, bard or sage,
King or Czar in any age :
Not one man among them all,
Whom in vision I recall,
May aspire, or dare to be
What my teacher is to me.

II.

I revere the pious man,
Keep his counsel if I can ;
Walking now in wisdom's ways,
Thus I trust to pass my days.
Czar, and King, and President,
Doubtless for our good are sent :
But in none of them I see
What my teacher is to me.

III.

The affection of my friend
Wins me as with love I bend
Toward the heart that's ever true,
Praising all I say or do.
But that friend with kindly thought,
Loves me well, but chides me not;
Say, then, can that friend e'er be
What my teacher is to me?

IV.

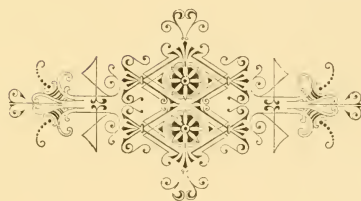
E'en a father's, mother's love,
Hailing as from heaven above,
May be blind to my desert,
Or may flatter to my hurt.
Shall I love them less for this?
No! I answer with a kiss.
How, then, can my parents be
All my teacher is to me?

V.

Only one Exemplar ripe
Seems my teacher's prototype;
He who sees my mind and heart,
Who can truth and grace impart.
In such heavenly light I'll go,
Faithful in my work below;
That to others I may be
What my teacher is to me.

VI.

Come then weal, or come then woe,
Naught but gratitude I'll show ;
Blessings on the Hand Divine
Guiding me to learning's shrine ;
Blessings on the men who stand
To guard that shrine throughout the land ;
May they bless all who may be
What my teacher is to me.



KATTERSKILL.

KATTEERSKILL.

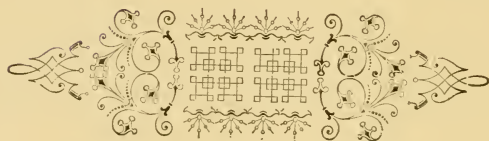
I.

’TWAS morning, near high peak, and the ascent,
Five couples strong, (John Taylor in the seat
As guide) betray’d no thought of swift retreat,
But sang still upward with a glad intent!
The way zigzagging, with vast bowlders rent,
Reveal’d new hills, bright streams, and fresh warm fields
Whereon sleek cattle found what Nature yields
In pastures sweet. Essaying, next we went
On foot toward caves and fissures so forlorn,
They seem’d to harbor ghouls and Calibans,
Where Prosperos and Mirandas ne’er were born,
Nor root nor branch show’d sign of human hands.
A perpendicular pile, all bald and shorn
Of leaf and limb, before us sternly stands!

II.

Now at the south a sunny path appears,
By which the sheep and shepherd wind their way;
And we, like lost sheep that have gone astray,
Pass this Hill Difficulty without fears.
A short hour more, and what salutes our ears?
One long ecstatic shout! We gain the hight
Where voice of triumph cheers the sunlit sight!


The deep abyss in front the greeting hears,
And answers with long echoes distant far ;
A holier breath of freedom nerves each soul,
As young eyes compass where blue mountains are,
And see an eagle hastening to its goal.
Nor cloud nor dimness might the valley mar,
As toward its home God bids the river roll.



UPON THE DELAWARE.

UPON THE DELAWARE.

I.

OME court the noisy Lackawax,
Where heavy bowlders are ;
But give to me more frequently
The quiet Delaware.

II.

See where yon trains of dusty coal
Come thundering from afar ;
But Erie couples all, and flies
Along the Delaware.

III.

The land of Penn is good for coal,
And coal burns everywhere ;
But enterprise and cash from York
Still seek the Delaware.

IV.

I stood upon the Hill of Snakes,
But snakes I saw not there ;
Nor boats upon the Lackawax,
They were on Delaware.

V.

Aunt Jane lives not on Lackawax,
 You could not find her there ;
 She lives a calm contented life
 Upon the Delaware.

VI.

And Laura with the laughing eyes,
 (A fascinating pair!)
 The Lackawaxen's banks would shun,
 And die on Delaware.

VII.

And father Holbert, how could *he*
 Resist his stopping where
 The Lackawaxen lost its voice
 Amid the Delaware.

VIII.

The greater must include the less,
 An axiom true and fair ;
 Therefore the Lackawaxen lost,
 Is found in Delaware.



A HINDOO ARTIST.

A HINDOO ARTIST.

"I passed a number of houses illuminated for marriage festivities, and from one of them came the sound of a flute more shrill and piercing, I have no doubt, than any other flute in the world. Its tones were so intensely shrill as to become tangible. They were shot out of the windows like arrows, and whenever any one struck you, it was followed by a keen sense of pain. They flew whistling down the street, rattling against the walls, transfixing all civilized ears, and torturing all susceptible hearts. I shudder, even now, to think of the smarts I endured while passing that house."—*Bayard Taylor's Letters*.

I.

TOULOU!

Now hide your mouth, estopp'd forever!



And you,

Siedè and Eben! now or never

Give us your last trills. For sad vexation,

Grim despair, yea, utter desolation

Shall everlastingly betide the man

That lightly blows 'gainst him of Hindostàn.

II.

In style

Of faultless *embouchure*, but one,

John Kyle!

Might ever dare such race to run.

But look you! Where are e'en his dancing eyes,

And curving red lips, cause of many sighs!

Frighten'd to paleness by this copper man,

Vermilion-lipp'd, dark-eyed of Hindostàn!

III.

To rouse
 Me, slumbering, hark! a steam-car whistles!
 And cows,
 With eyes dilate, rush into thistles!
 But pierc'd by shriller tones, oh! shriller far
 Than steam-blown whistles, or the clang of war,—
 'Sdeath! I am shot by tireless heathen man,
 Ear-missil'd through by him of Hindostàn!

IV.

Bombay,
 Seringapatàm, and Ganges' shore,
 And they
 In warm Ceylon, may evermore
 Rejoice in thee, great artist! Barnum now
 Shall mourn for Christendom, that such as thou
 Shouldst waste thy strength, invulnerable man!
 Upon the desert air of Hindostàn.



THE SOPRANO.

THE SOPRANO.

“The soprano voice of woman is the perennial ripple on the sea of melody.”

—*William Henry Fry.*

I.

ENVELOP'D in white, with her light hanging hair,
This heroine stepp'd as though treading on air;
Her face was as fair as the lily in bloom,
Her shining blue eye glanc'd on all in the room.
The company listen'd,—the band broke suspense,
And out gush'd the tones with a ravishing sense.
O lov'd voice of woman! In silence soon lost,
Revive each sad soul with a new Pentecost!

II.

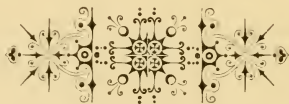
Two dark dreamy eyes that in rest have sweet spells
To transfix or to charm, like the gay gazelle's;
That new singer shone, in her moments of might,
Like an Angel of Goodness presiding o'er Right.
Each run and each trill, like the Light in the North,
Would blend earth with heav'n as her soul sent them forth.
Each cadence so brilliant, or soft in repose,
That you sang with the stars, or dwelt with the rose.

III.

Then forth came the queenly, mature in her art,
 Majestic in form, and confiding in heart ;
 Her face the clear mirror of pure inner thought—
 Her life had been toilsome, yet bravely she fought.
 How easy doth lie the fresh laurel on one
 Who, conquering all schools, is still fetter'd by none ;
 Who can reign Queen of Song, yet most graciously,
 Reign as wife and as mother right royally !

IV.

Though blonde or brunette, and though young or mature,
 Sing on, ye sweet singers, if but to assure
 The cold and the proud ones of earth that there lies
 In your beautiful art the work of the skies.
 I envy you nothing, I simply rejoice
 That I live to be near you, and hear your voice :
 Voice of woman ! of heaven ! In silence soon lost,
 Revive each sad soul with a new Pentecost !



TO ARIEL.

TO ARIEL.

I.

DEAR little sprite!
Of form so light,
Say, whither dost thou slily rove?
Dost fear to come,
And be like some,
Sweet being cherish'd, wing'd with love?

II.

Ah! why away?
Come, come and stay,
And be my star of destiny;
I'll play with thee,
I'll laugh with thee,
So thou art near, what's care to me?

III.

And Ariel said:
"Near Flora's bed
I live, and fly blue skies among;
I'm known afar,
In earth and air,
I'm sought by all, by old and young."

“And would you dwell
Near hill or dell,
Or by the gentle rivulet’s side?
With heavenward eye,
Bid trouble fly,
With faith and hope to heaven we’ll glide.”



WERE I THE MORNING.

WERE I THE MORNING.

From the German.

I.

WERE I the morning,
Tremblingly dawning,
Brightly adorning
Sweet eyes of thine ;
Softly upraising
Thine eyes and gazing,
I should be praising
Smiles blent with mine.

II.

Were I the noonday,
Warm rays should soon play
On thy lips alway
Love's litany !
Picturing ever
My soul's endeavor,
Treasur'd forever :
"Remember me."

III.

Were I the twilight,
Wedded to starlight,
Close into soft night
 My bird should sing
In thy lone dwelling,
Tenderly telling,
With a charm'd quelling,
 "Forever cling."

IV.

Were I the night, love,
Kissing my dear dove,
Far in bliss above
 I'd dream of thee ;
And I should gain soon
A precious life boon ;
And sing in true tune,
 "Dream thou of me."




To JOSEPHINE.

TO JOSEPHINE.

From the German of F. Matthison.

I.

 THINK of thee,
When tunefully
The nightingales
In groves sing tales.
When think'st of me?

II.

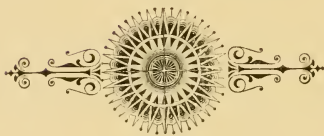
I think of thee,
Where soothingly
In pale twilight
Gush fountains bright.
Where think'st of me?

III.

I think of thee,
As tremblingly
My heart's sweet pain
Sends tears like rain.
How think'st of me?

IV.


O think of me
Till joyfully
 We meet above!
 Till then, my love.
I'll think of thee.



TELL ME, DEAREST.

TELL ME, DEAREST

I.

ELL me, dearest,
When thou hearest
My humble name,
Unknown to fame,—
My lot would'st share? Thou dost not fear
A home obscure,
If but secure
The voice of love alone to hear.

II.

Tell me, dearest,
When thou hearest
Of rank and gold,
And titles old;
Dost wish to share in all their care?
Content to know
Of gaudy show,
While love may never cheer thee there!

III.

Tell me, dearest,
 When thou hearest
 Of dazzling eyes,
 Where beauty lies,
 Their secret sighs, say, could'st thou bear?
 Ah! when 'tis told,
 They soon grow cold,—
 Their beauty gone—can love be there?

IV.

Tell me, dearest,
 When thou hearest
 My humble name,
 Unknown to fame,—
 My lot would'st share? Thou dost not fear
 A home obscure,
 If but secure
 The voice of love alone to hear.



The Chosen One.

THE CHOSEN ONE.

Suabian Volksmelodie.

I.

COME, come, come, my dearest ; come, come, come, my dearest ;
Come, come, come, and sit thee by my side, love ;
I have so gladly thought of thee, I suffer !
My dearest, come, come, come, and sit thee by my side, love.
O so sweet and fair !
None with thee compare ;
O with me remain,
Till death part us twain.
My dearest, come, come, come, &c.

II.

Look, look, look, my dearest ; look, look, look, my dearest ;
Look, look, look within mine eyes, mine eyes, love ;
There canst thou see, my love, bright pictures shining ;
My dearest, look, look, look within, within my eyes, love :
Look not low nor high,
But give me thine eye ;
Come to my dear home,
Thou wilt never roam.
My dearest, look, look, look, &c.

III.

Then, then, then, my dearest ; then, then, then, my dearest ;
Then, then thou must give, must give thy plighted vow ;
Since without thee my life is ever lonely ;
My dearest, then, then thou must give, must give thy plighted vow:
If thou give it not,
War shall be my lot !
Deign my life to save
From an early grave.
My dearest, then, then, then, &c.




WITH THEE.

WITH THEE.

From the Prince of Caucasus.

I.

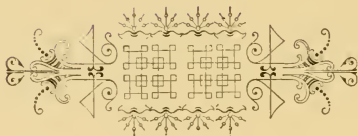
 FAR out in measureless air,
Borne on the bright sea waves ;
Along by vale and mountain,
Where piercing storm wind raves :
Far from my native land,
Dwelling on distant strand
I'll go with thee,
With thee !

II.

Along by dreadful ice zones,
So stiff, so cold and bleak !
Or on the arid desert,
Where no tree shades the weak :
Where, threat'ning in each wind,
Death and the grave I find,
Still, still with thee,
With thee !

III.


Or wert thou in dark prison,
I ne'er could stay behind ;
For only in thy presence
Can I true freedom find.
All danger I will meet,
E'en fiercest death I'll greet,
Still, still with thee,
With thee !



AD FILIAM.

AD FILIAM.

I.

OW this is to Mary,
Secretive and wary,
Yet tender and true ;
Who carries, in fashion,
A heart full of passion,
Determin'd to dash on
Without me or you!

II.

Can man e'er deceive her
By vows to believe her
His darling alone ?
Let sober discretion
Force him to confession,
And candid concession,—
She is not his own.

III.

Why should a young maiden
So early be laden

With dismal foretaste
Of days which are dawning,
The light of whose morning
May cause an adorning
Of mourning in haste?

IV.

Enjoy the sweet blessing,
No time less distressing,
Of youthful surcease;
Survey the location,
Fill up the vacation
'Twixt maid and wife's station
With mental increase.

V.

The plastic young muscle,
The heart full of bustle,
An undaunted will,
Come once to their owner,
And will not disown her,
Nor ever bemoan her,
If exercis'd still.

VI.

The eye sharp and single,
 The ear quick to tingle
 With changes of tone ;
 Attention, demanding
 A Memory standing
 As umpire, commanding
 The Whole of Life's Own !

VII.

Xantippe capricious,
 Had heart but to wish us
 Perpetual hell ;
 Her spouse bore the burning
 Of fiery words, turning
 In peace, thereby learning
 Forbearance full well.

VIII.

Cornelia did better,
 And seriously set her
 Sweet thoughts on her boys ;
 Of high Roman mothers,
 She led all the others,
 Her sons, Gracchian brothers,
 Fulfilling all joys.

IX.

But Byron and Goethe,
 And many a pate a —
 Round here and below,
 Forgot the sweet pleasure
 Of purity's leisure,
 And barter'd that treasure
 For leanness and woe.

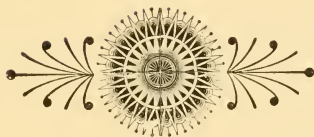
X.

An unbalanc'd teacher,
 And sometimes, a preacher,
 Might proudly have staid,
 Rejoicing forever,
 If only they never
 Had sighed for endeavor
 Unhappily made.

XI.

Then banish your scorning,
 And learn from this warning
 A stray truth or two ;
 Begin right, and stay so,—
 Believe, for I say so,
 And thus will your face O,
 Be lovely and true.

A truthful beginning
Will save from much sinning,
And scandalous roar ;
Should Faith sit beside you,
A host might deride you,
She straightway would guide you
To Heav'n's happy shore.



THE CONFIDENT
AMERICAN.

THE CONFIDENT AMERICAN.

I.

I WENT a-hunting, hurrying fast
For facts about the nation ;
And found for my delight, at last,
We've beaten all creation !
There's not a thing worth naming here,
We have not in profusion ;
The very skies, so bright and clear,
Confirm the curt conclusion.

II.

No skies are brighter, and no hills
Are higher, and you know it !
Green Mountains, White, with rocky rills,
And Catskill plainly show it.
The Alleghanies are not tame,
Our lakes have many a trout in ;
And fishing parties on the same,
First catch, then go a-shoutin' !

III.

Your nag may travel farther West,
 And goaded still by whip, he
 Shall stand for wonder and for rest,
 And face the Mississippi ;—
 A linked sweetness long drawn out,"
 From Pontchartrain to Duluth ;
 Along whose banks men quite devout
 Instruct the freshblown true youth.

IV.

A longer river stretcheth up,
 Where Indians fight in fury ;
 Where wolves do howl that bears may sup,
 While roars the mad Missouri.
 See now what mountains greet your eye!
 Their summit can you compass ?
 Now, stranger, how is that for high ?
 And will you further stump us ?

V.

Come down this slope, and feel the breeze,—
 A zephyr of the ocean
 Revives the soul with balms from trees
 Sweet-breath'd like love's own potion.
 Stop not for love, nor linger long
 Amid Pacific airing ;
 The fruits, the vines, the wines, the song
 Shall fire you with new daring.

VI.

Look to the North! On yonder peaks
 The snow remaineth ever;
 While down below, in shining streaks
 The gold recedeth never.
 And silver too comes up to view,
 A big bonanza showing;
 Can scene so new be shown to you,
 And be like this, worth knowing?

VII.

Away! Away! Just once to be
 Where man doth many marry!
 But tarry not! You shall not see
 Monogamy miscarry!
 How can one man sincerely love
 Plurality of women?
 Unless the Devil fully prove
 His first wife false took him in!

VIII.

A double sin, polygamist!
 In creed, or in the practice;
 True woman's faith cannot exist,
 Where such a state the fact is.
 Why not to Turkey quickly flee,
 And keep your private harem;
 Since Uncle Sam will not agree
 Such horrid rites to bear 'em.

IX.

The Lone Star shines to beckon us
 Across its plains of grazing ;
 A million cattle reckon us
 As sheep in foolish gazing.
 This sight recalls the early time
 When Abr'ham, Isaac, Jacob,
 And Laban, too, in their sweet prime,
 Their herds and flocks did wake up !

X.

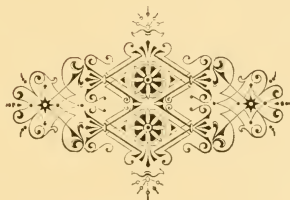
Now where the old plantation pine
 Sings dirges of sad sorrow ;
 And where the proud palm gives no sign
 Of brighter hours to-morrow ;
 I look around and view the land
 Where millions might be feeding ;
 And dare, with Freedom there to stand,
 And cheer their hearts yet bleeding.

XI.

I hasten up where people meet
 In cordial congregation ;
 Where Pennsylvania's sons would greet
 The men of every nation.
 Where shall my eyes most love to dwell
 In this grand exposition ?
 'Tis where my countrymen excel
 In friendly recognition.

XII.

A recognition of all men,
White, black, or neutral tinted,
Who try by Art and Learning's ken,
To rise, though Nature stinted.
It is the boy who listens well,
And looks, compares, considers,
That makes the man who loves to tell
He left behind all bidders!



A Summer Day
On the Hudson.

A SUMMER DAY ON THE HUDSON.

“Only a Remnant.”—*Dry Goods Clerk.*

I.

JULIA!
Peculia':—

Away, we're bounding o'er the Hudson's foaming tide!
Hoboken!
Provokin':—
No last view at the Fields Elysian, on the Western side.
Such fog, my eye!
We all did cry,
And soon the sun above the Eastern shore we spy.

II.

That's him I see!
How gloriously
He bids all noisome vapor from the waves depart!
And lawn, and glade,
And palisade,
In golden tint are pictur'd now to cheer each heart.
In Tappan Sea,
Mein Herr Von C.
Look'd straight at me,
“Sing! sing!” said he,
Your heart is glad, the sun is shining gloriously!

III.

“That nose!”

“Whose nose?”

Be careful how you treat the good Saint Anthony ;

He'll play giraffe,

And cut you quite ;

And that's not half

His saintly spite :

He'll stand invisible,

And make you risible ;

And when he's visible,

His Saintship is able

To look three ways at once : North, South and 'cross to Point
[Stony !

IV.

Clear weather now,

The mountain's brow

Defin'd in the blue distance now appears afar ;

The vale between,

A checker'd scene

Of many color'd fields and woods displays. There are

The Katterskill and Sleepy Hollow,

(I seem Old Diedrich's steps to follow ;)

Enchanting view !

Nor strange, nor new ;

But ever as I gaze on yonder cloud-topp'd hills,

All thought of earth forgot, I feel 'tis heav'n that thrills.

V.

“Come, come away !

I cannot stay—

The dinner bell is heard, and through the doors let's tumble ;

Let go my skirt!
Scratch gravel, dirt,
And get your silver knife and fork without a grumble."
'Tis strange to see
How curiously
Those "gemmen" cut and run without a single stumble;
While, nothing fearing,
But persevering,
Somebody bids you curtly for your tickets fumble.
Clatter, clatter,
Knife and platter.
"See! you spatter
Me with fat, or
Something greasy,—
Just be easy."
Munching, crunching,
Oh! the punching!
"Waiter! here, man,
This way steer, man,
Take my plate, man,
Quick! don't wait, man!"

VI.

See him vanish!
Walking Spanish,
Bringing chicken:
Fork I stick in.—
Ancient victim,
How I prick'd him!
Tried to part him,
Couldn't start him!
"Waiter! here man,
'S very queer, man,

Thus to treat me!
'S tough! to cheat me
Of my dinner:
This old sinner
Take away, man,
Quick, I pray, man!"

VII.

Thus we dash on
Quite in fashion;
Quick succession,
Much oppression;
Steamboat rolling,
Bell a-tolling;
Feeling queerly,
Pain'd severely;
Get up grumbling,
Mumbling, stumbling;
Scamper up the steamboat staircase, stewing, stinging,
And—bless the balmy breeze, some comfort to me bringing.

VIII.

On upper deck shady
We sit with the lady-
Like Julie and Sadie,
And Thomas is near;
That rubicund Thomas,
Who, plighting his promise,
Stole suddenly from us
Maria so dear,—
While all the while singing his Kathleen Mavourneen;
A plague on the spalpeen! He caus'd us much mournin'.

IX.

This bevy of lovers,
 Too soon it discovers
 The parting that hovers
 O'er meetings mundane ;
 The mountains grow bluer,
 Our smiles, they are fewer,
 But sweeter and truer
 As port we shall gain.

* * * *

But Julie, the joy of that summer day's sailing,
 Hath pass'd where the River of Life is regaling.



A MID CENTURY
MUSICAL SURVEY.

A MID CENTURY MUSICAL SURVEY.

Jonathan, loquitur

I.

NEVERY far down East, near the Penobscot,
And Winnepisseogee,
There lived a queer old fogey,
Content with his farm, house and barn. Not
A spot
Could surpass the green valley and cot
Where my governor liv'd. Ah! you should see
As did my young eyes, the old elm tree,
As it shaded the spring
Which mirror'd my face ;
You should hear the lark sing,
As he flew into space !
There I slaked my thirst, then climbed the tree,
That old elm tree, on purpose to see
The trim built nest,
A place of rest,
Which a robin had lined so carefully :
And all day long,
A sweet, sad song
Was poured till I sang respondingly.

II.

One summer night,
 The stars shone bright,
 I heard a sound which my soul still hears—
 'Twas a sound that thrill'd with hopes and fears.
 The night was warm, in my tiny bed,
 I lay a-dreaming of nothing ill;
 When, heaven-attunèd, near my head
 Sang a sweet lone bird, a whippowil.
 From that hour I lovèd all sweet sounds,
 From grave to gay. My heart abounds
 With a full, strange gladness, when I hear
 A light wing'd, feather'd songster near.
 A bobolink quite sets me crazy,
 Singing his buffo songs in ways he
 Deems Lablache might envy;
 While robins a-mating, as toward the skies
 They sing, are Grisis and Marios in disguise,
 Save their notes they nor sell nor lend ye!
 But give them outright in most measureless melody,
 Yea! Making earth glad with mellifluent melody.

III.

Those old home scenes! Forever gone,
 Voices that sung and eyes that shone.
 The birds, and trees, and evening breeze,
 Smiles and tears of the lov'd ones,—these
 Have left an undying music, writ
 On memory's brightest page, and lit
 With hope's enduring, joyous smile,
 That bids all fear depart the while.
 Long years have pass'd, ah! need I say
 I have lost the red blush of that early day?

IV.

Presto! now Eastward my Pegasus flies,
 Nor stops till he breathes beneath Italy's skies.
 Just fancy a musical Yankee at Naples,
 Inquiring about all the musical staples.
 I am not so green as to sneer at a Verdi,
 Who caters to tastes of republicans sturdy;
 Whose melodies made of material brassy,
 Are certain to please a proscribed lad or lassie;
 Whose Dukes strut and rage in sublime recitation;
 Whose Kings are the pink of a future creation.
 Such kings, it is certain, have rarely existed,
 Who, like Hugo's, forsooth, can be turned and be twisted
 To act as by mercy, to pardon a rival,
 To court a reformer, and so a revival.
 Such drama reflects but the anticipation
 Of people who pray for a regeneration!
 They had heard it in "Tell," and had heard it in "Moses,"
 Years before, by Rossini,—who calmly reposes
 On laurels well earn'd, who was bravo'd by Byron,
 But who long sat mute, an Apollo in iron!
 O Italy! Italy! wake from thy slumbers,
 And give us the power of thine ancient numbers.

V.

With a bound,
 I am found
 In the city of Boulevards. Palace Parisian,
 Gothic temple and Grecian arrest my glad vision.
 Modern centre of art,
 What a strange, strange part
 Hast thou played in full sight of the Nations' derision!
 Thy press is in irons,
 And darkness environs

Thy scholars, poets, all, by thy soldiers' decision.
 It were well if thy masters of song could assemble,
 And chant of true freedom till tyrants should tremble;
 But alas! even Meyerbeer hates reformation,
Vide "Prophet" and "Huguenots" for explanation.
 Then Auber is not the love-liberty fellow
 He was, when he wrote his rich "Masaniello."
 Now Halevy goads a lone, wandering Hebrew,
 Till the poor Jew dies, and pray what else could he do?
 Then I strive to go back, and I stumble on Adam;
 But his music and plots seem as Poverty had 'em.
 And your Wolff and your Prudent, light-finger'd popinjays,
 Pummel the piano, and prettily hop in ways
 Curious to see!
 Particularly
 When "grande fantasie"
 Is announced in the bills. But chiefly improvements
 In Reicha, Bertini,
 And old Cherubini
 May be seen. And between ye
 And me, their best music is strict. All their movements
 Have subjects of strength and decision,
 Which they treat with a rare mental vision.

VI.

Haste I now to land of Handel,
 Handel, who, like star to candle,
 Shines upon each lone successor,
 Call'd composer or professor.
 Land of Bach and father Haydn,
 Land of many a blue-eyed maiden;
 Home of Mozart and Beethoven!
 Scene where soul and nature, woven

In bright beauty gave a Schiller,
Goethe, and that great fulfiller
Of more modern Art's prediction,
Mendelssohn.

It is no fiction
Claims my credence, when this nation
Boasts of this wide reputation.
Past hath spoken, and the Future
May do just as much to suit your
Fancy, ye musicians ;
But in your positions,
Judge ye well of masters living.
Neukomm and Spohr,
And many more,
May arrest no stray misgiving.
One last new man,
Robert Schumann,
Asks my regard to those stories misty,
Peris and Manfreds. Baton in fist, he
Would Mephistophelianly assist ye !
Wagner and Liszt, transcendently turning
Transitions and discords, with great show of learning,
To surprise and befog,
And otherwise clog :
Make the human voice writhe like a slave under lashing,
Till it dies while the strings and the brass do the thrashing !

VII.

Methinks it were wiser to cease this poor wandering,
And lead a good life of more Christianly pondering.
Schneider von Wartensee, Marx and Hauptman,
Teachers profound,
In your daily round,

Bid the young student "never to doubt, man!
God is above us!
Christ,—he will love us,
And the Spirit shall dwell with the lover of truth, man!"

VIII.

Now to "merrie England" flies my
Steed poetic, and my cries high
Startle some stray cockney players
Into very nervous weighers
Of my words. "And what composer
Have you living?" 'Tis a poser!
They could point to many a dead man,
But of living not a red man.
"Matthew Locke and Harry Purcell,"
Thus they say in vex'd rehearsal—
"Morley, Gibbons, Croft and Blow, sir;
Are enough for us to know, sir;
Down the stream of time a-sailing,
Please observe, and stop your railing—
See arise 'successor' Boyce, sir,
Kent, and Clarke; and Crotch, whose voice, sir,
Sounds from 'Palestine' so lofty,"—
"Hush! a moment, friends," thus soft I
Chide their memories. "Never lean a
Bit on these: from Palestrina
They learn'd all. And as to late days,
Truth, with an unerring Fate, says,
Bishop now most justly merits
Name no child of his inherits.
Bennett and Macfarren labor,
But Mendelssohn was too near neighbor.
Your authors in Opera might have solace,
But the Celt claims all,—Rooke, Balfe and Wallace."

IX.

Yet this day I will not forget,
 That in England a price is set
 Upon Handel and Haydn higher far
 Than wealth of Ind, or golden bar
 From any clime. And here convene
 With Lord and Lady, Prince and Queen,
 Those thousand-voicéd companies,
 United in grand harmonies,
 In praise of Heav'n and Heav'n's King.
 Organ and harp, and wind and string
 Join in the glorious festival ;
 Noble and peasant, great and small,
 " Hallelujah " sing
 To Heav'n's King,—
 The " Lord of lords," and God above all !

X.

Back to my native land !
 Treading once more the strand
 Sacred to God and to Liberty :
 Shades of my Pilgrim Sires,
 Fled from thy martyr fires,
 Teach me new songs of fidelity.

XI.

By the vow I have taken,
 I will not be shaken
 In purpose to mete out strict justice ;

Every shallow pretender,
Or grosser offender,
Should, in duty, be punish'd. Thus 'tis
Fair that all musical pioneers
Be judged by their fruits in after years.

* * * * *

Yet be not deceived! For re-action will come,
When Art, like Religion, shall here have a home.



FAREWELL TO HOME.

FAREWELL TO HOME.

I.

FAREWELL to the scenes of my childhood forever,
The fields and the woods where I linger'd entranc'd ;
The elm and the pine which in youthful endeavor
I climbed till my eyes on the clear heav'n glanc'd.

II.

Farewell to the brook which o'er pebbles so gaily
Ran laughingly down from the blue mountain spring ;
Where I knelt with devotion and drank of it daily,
And now to my mem'ry impulsively bring.

III.

Farewell, O farewell to the hearth where my mother
Smil'd tenderly, sweetly on all who were there ;
But chiefly on him, as on sister and brother,
My noble old father, erect in his chair.

IV.


O life is not barren, if tears come unbidden,
In thinking of hearts and of homes which were dear ;
When life was all sunshine, and nothing was hidden
Except the temptation to sin and to fear.

O BRIGHT BE
THE THOUGHT.

O BRIGHT BE THE THOUGHT.

Written during Illness.

I.

 BRIGHT be the thought in the night of my sorrow,
That lights up the hours with sweet hope for the morrow;
Let it shine on my soul as the star that of yore
Pointed prophet-tongued magi to Christ evermore.

II.

The labor of life inharmoniously blending
With querulous doubt, to despair is but tending;
Shall I barter my faith, and my new song of gladness,
And heavenly peace, for such toiling in sadness?

III.

'T were worse than fatuity! Madness impending
Shall dim my mind's eye, ere my ear be caught lending
A willing assent to fatal a treason,
That gives me for Heaven the Goddess of Reason!

III.

Be calm, then, my heart, in the faith that a mother
First taught, under God: dare I ask for another?
Oh no! for I saw when her last look was given,
That look full of hope, full of peace and of heaven.

THE YOUNG CRUSADER.

THE YOUNG GRUSADER.

After hearing a Lecture on Mohammedanism by Rev. F. F. Ellinwood.

I.

THE Red Cross Knight with men of might
O'er Paynim hosts may tread ;
But I will stay, secure each day
Sustain'd by faith instead.
I cannot wield in tent or field
The Cœur de Lion's spear ;
But I can seek by calling meek
The Spirit's voice to hear.
Then willing still,
With hope I'll fill
Each day and hour's vocation,
Till, Lord of life,
In holy strife,
Through Thee I win salvation.

II.

The Moslem band in Holy Land
These eyes may never see ;
But I can trace my dear Lord's face
Through dark Gethsemane.
The cimeter may flash in war,

By mosque and minaret ;
I only see on Calvary
My Lord is hanging yet !
Dear Lord in heaven,
If I have striven
To seek one consolation ;
O let it be
That I through Thee,
May win my soul's salvation.

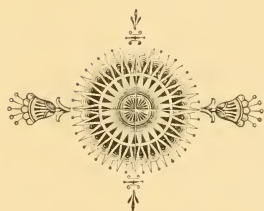
III.

Toward Mecca still the Turk shall kneel,
On his false prophet call ;
My heavenly gem Jerusalem
To me is all in all.
Sultan or Sheikh I do not like
Nor houris nor harèms ;
My Mother's Lord and His true Word
Command my noblest aims.
Then willing still,
With hope I'll fill
Each day and hour's vocation ;
Till, Lord of life,
In holy strife,
Through Thee I win salvation.

IV.

The Orient gleams with bloody streams,
The Russian Czar is there ;
Let Christian might defend the right,
And save man everywhere.

But in my round of life is found
The cross I daily raise ;
My God ! arouse my soul to vows
Of penitence and praise.
While willing still,
With hope I'll fill
Each day and hour's vocation ;
Till, Lord of life,
In holy strife,
Through Thee I win salvation.



MARIA AND THEALIA.

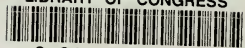
MARIA AND THALIA.

MARIA! O supremely blest that name,
Sweet Virgin Mother of the Only Son
Of God! Could greater joy descend upon
A woman born, or light a purer flame
Than the angel's voice which fill'd thy young life's aim?
The serpent's head is bruised by Him alone,
Thy Heav'n-Sired Offspring, as in Eden shown,
And man, through Him, shall rise from sinful shame.
Thalia! Virgin Muse! Be ever near
To light the way to sweetest nature's shrine;
Bid Harmony's joyful voice forever cheer
All human hearts with charity divine,
So may our lives be free from deathly fear,
And with a light celestial ever shine.





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